History of the
Brahmana Child-Widows' Hostel
Madras
1907–1919.

Brahmana Widows' Hostel
Opened 1912

MRS. DRYSDALE.

History of the Brahmana Child-Widows' Hostel, Madras, 1907—1919.

CHAPTER I.

I HAVE often been asked by several persons interested in Education to write a short history of the now well-known Brahman Child-Widows' Hostel, which is located in the old Ice House near the sea. I purposely deferred doing so, as the movement being so new, it seemed difficult to obtain the proper perspective or even to appraise the value of the work itself, until sufficient time had elapsed to enable the young Brahman widows to prove that they themselves were worthy of the exceptional opportunity given to them for the first time in this Presidency of receiving a good Secondary Education, and even of prosecuting their studies still further in preparation for the teaching, medical and nursing profession.

On the 16th June, 1905, I joined the Madras Educational Department as the Inspectress of Girls' Schools, Southern Circle. On the following day the approved programme showed that I was expected to inspect a large Hindu Government Training School and like many people from the West, great was my astonishment on first making the acquaintance of the bright, yet dignified, little caste Hindu pupils, with their old-world ways. They are the heirs of that longstanding tradition, which is specially exemplified in the case of the Brahmans who have taken such infinite care, by preventing caste inter-marriage, to keep their own caste, both as regards physical traits and mental development, true to the original type. These fascinating little girls at once absorbed my attention and practically the first two hours were spent in examining their very attractive dress and beautiful jewellery; while they, too, seemed to enter into the spirit of the novel inspection by trying to tell me by means of interpreters not only their own names, but practically the whole of their history as well. Which Westerner has not been fascinated by those beautiful jewels, suspended from the nose, or the ears, or clasping the neck, wrists and ankles? And what a discovery to find that a solid piece of gold, very frequently also adorned the back of the head. What pretty and graceful manners are innate, as it were, in the caste Hindu girls, and how gracefully they move when going through their own Indian games and dances of Kummy and Kolattam to the accompaniment of hand-beating and quick manipulation of pretty coloured sticks to the pleasant clashing of anklets and bracelets.

My ambition was at once aroused to try and get into closer touch with such very attractive little mortals, who seemingly must have a very different outlook on life to that experienced by the more exposed and more material children of the West. To obtain this knowledge, however, meant long study of the Tamil tongue, and the early history of India, coupled with close observation of the more modern customs of the Tamilians of the South.

My attention was next directed to the teachers who had charge of these interesting little girls for practically five hours each day, and great was my astonishment to learn that, unlike the schools in the West, the teachers were all recruited from much lower castes, professing different religious beliefs, and brought up in such a way as to have become practically estranged from the old-world Hindu manners, and even adopting a different mode of dress. It at once occurred to me that there could exist scarcely any sympathy between the teachers and the taught, and that the work of the former must be confined largely to the imparting of mere mechanical instruction without being able to utilise that potent instrument of true education for the development of the character of the young minds entrusted to their charge. This early impression became deepened on a closer acquaintance with the Hindu Girls' Schools throughout the eight districts which were then comprised in the old Southern Circle. I very quickly came to the conclusion that, as an Educational Officer, I was called on to put forth a big effort to find a solution for the problem of obtaining teachers for the Hindu Girls' Schools, who would be drawn from the same class as the pupils they taught, and who would thus be in constant touch and sympathy with the lives of the girls so solemnly entrusted to them for education in the true sense of the word.

Further study of everyday conditions of the education of Hindu girls soon showed me that the large class of spinsters, who practically form the great teaching body of the West existed not in Southern India where the stern decrees of religion and caste demand early child-marriage. The Hindu girls are accordingly deprived at one fell stroke of the advantages accruing from continuing their education at

the most impressionable age of life, when they might well hope to develop those high mental powers which are, as it were, the marked characteristics of the Brahman caste. The same custom prevents the married caste women from taking any useful share in the work of education outside the precincts of their own households.)

Who, then, were left to step into the breach and take up the onerous work of studying and otherwise making definite preparation for the noble profession of teaching? Yes, there was one large and unused factor still available, if only it could be reached and if the powers that be would help in tapping that fruitful source that was capable of supplying thousands of excellent teachers who could thoroughly enter into the daily lives of the innumerable caste girls of the Madras Presidency. (A reference to the Census proved clearly that there were at the time no less than 22,395 young Brahman widows between the ages of 5 and 15. What a dreadful fate, you will say, awaits these baby girls of 5 and 6, who are thoughtlessly launched into the ceremony of marriage, which is irrevocable amongst the Brahman community? / Should their boy husbands die the following week, the unfortunate girls are for ever and aye consigned to the dark shades of the prison-house of widowhood with all its dire and dreadful consequences. What these are would take too long to mention here, but surely the sympathy of all humane women must be enlisted on the side of those dumb sufferers, who must for the rest of their lives be regarded not only as inauspicious in themselves, but even as capable of imparting some of their ill-luck to all those who accidentally look upon them on the day of the ceremonious marriage festival and on other important occasions when times of rejoicing are observed in the household. Watch the growth of those sad-eyed little child-widows, whose very appearance will soon be disfigured by shaving their heads, removing all ornaments, and forcing them to dress in the widow's white mourning garb, which alas rarely retains much of its pristine whiteness owing to the constant round of daily toil through which the widows have to pass uncomplainingly!

(It is true that the Brahman widows make very useful domestic servants and thus save the wages of servants and cooks for all the poor and middle class Brahman homes. The widows, as a rule, remain in their parents' houses during their lifetime, and at their death are passed on to the eldest brother of the family and occasionally even find their way to the mother-in-laws' houses in the same *role* of domestic servants. No doubt some rays of light now and then penetrate the gloomy existence of the wealthy Brahman widow, who, with advancing age, often commands a certain amount of influence within the home itself. On the whole, though the lives of a large number of Brahman child-widows seems to be largely associated with ignorance and suffering.) What a promising recruiting ground this numerous class of child-widows could be made for the teaching profession, especially when it is considered that the (Sastras themselves enjoin on Brahman widows' participation in all charitable and philanthropic work of every kind. And what more philanthropic and self-sacrificing work exists than that of the teaching profession itself?)

Emboldened by such thoughts, I at once sought the advice of that large-minded and sympathetic Educational Officer, the late Mr. Nagoji Rao and other interested Brahman elders, more especially Mr. Balakrishna Aiyar, the Public Prosecutor of Coimbatore, and with their help and guidance the scheme of founding a Brahman Widows' Hostel in Coimbatore itself gradually matured in my mind, until it took definite shape in 1907, and the scheme was first sent to the Director of Public Instruction as a business-like proposition in February 1908 and after considerable correspondence the scheme was sanctioned in September, 1912.

Meanwhile the little informal meetings went on from time to time in my bungalow in Coimbatore, and hope was never allowed to flag, even though the wise Brahman elders frequently reminded me that, even if the scheme were sanctioned, strong opposition from the Brahman community itself would still have to be surmounted before they could be induced to part with the young widows, who played such a useful *role* as domestic servants in the numerous Brahman middle class households, not to mention the fact that caste prejudice would prevent even the more enlightened from allowing their widows to attend any public institution.

How could a mere foreigner ever hope to work such a scheme without a very decided assurance that help would be forthcoming from the Brahman community itself, who might well be expected to give one of their educated widows, who would be willing to throw herself into the work, and practically regard it as her life-mission?

While puzzling over these seemingly insuperable obstacles, I took a party of the teachers who formed the Christmas vacation class of 1909, to a picnic at the Agricultural College, Coimbatore. The College Officer, who volunteered to show the party round, was Mr. R. V. Subramania Aiyar, Chemistry Professor of the Agricultural College, and, while gazing from the flat roof of the new College over the vast plain beneath, (we soon entered into an animated conversation regarding the education of Hindu girls. The proud father was only too pleased to tell me what he was doing then for the education of his own

Sister Subbalakshimi

daughters. Great was my surprise to learn that his child-widowed daughter, R. S. Subbalakshimi Ammal, was actually studying at the time in the Junior B.A. Class of the Presidency College—an innovation which was practically regarded as revolutionary then, and which would have, in the ordinary way, entailed excommunication from the caste, not only of the father himself but also of his whole family. His courage brought its own reward, however, for the great Brahman community seemed not to abate their esteem for the daring man who broke through the senseless custom of depriving child-widows of a good education. Here, then, was clearly the person destined to carry out successfully the scheme which had now become, as it were, the main plank in my own educational work. Mr. Subramania Aiyar encouraged me not a little by promising to bring his widowed daughter, Subbalakshimi Ammal, to Coimbatore, when she had obtained her B.A. Degree in the Madras University.

At this stage ill-health demanded a respite, and furlough to Europe in June 1910 became imperative. Having had an inkling that the Senior Inspectress in Madras had expressed a strong wish to be retransferred to Coimbatore, I effectively burned my boats behind me before leaving the Southern Circle so that my transfer to Madras in January 1911, on my return from leave, did not come as a very great surprise. In the meanwhile, what had become of the scheme for establishing a Brahman Widows' Hostel in Coimbatore? The joyful news reached me soon after my arrival in Madras that the scheme was looked on favourably by Government, and permission was granted to give it a fair trial.

A fresh difficulty now arose of finding a suitable Hindu Girls' High School to which such a hostel could be attached so as to be central, and as it were, under the public gaze, with a view of convincing the Brahman community that the widow students were quite free to remain orthodox Hindus, while at the same time they were given every opportunity of being educated and of studying their own Hindu religion in a more thorough way perhaps than they ever could aspire to even in their own homes. At this stage, the Committee of the Hindu Girls' School, Mylapore, came forward to offer their school for the purpose, provided certain conditions were rigidly observed, more especially that of restricting admission to caste Hindu girls, thus barring the gates of knowledge to the girls of the numerous non-caste communities. Obviously such a condition could not be accepted by any impartial Government, even though I succeeded in obtaining a slight modification of it, viz., that admission to classes I to IV only were to be confined to caste girls and thereafter girls of all castes and creeds might be freely admitted to the school. The tedious correspondence went on for practically a year before the Government order was issued definitely declining to take over the school.

My attention was next turned to Triplicane where there was a great need for a Secondary School for girls, and just then the late Dewan Bahadur Ramaswami Nayudu and Rao Bahadur P. K. Subba Aiyar, who were the managers of the Vijayanagaram Maharaja's Girls' School, Triplicane, gave me a very cordial invitation to take over their school and raise it to the Secondary grade. This proposal was very quickly accepted and it was also decided at the same time to remove thither the Tamil Training Section of the Presidency Training School and attach it to the new school at Triplicane. But how to locate the new schools became a very difficult problem, as house accommodation in congested Triplicane is so very limited that it is well nigh impossible to secure a sufficiently commodious building for the accommodation of any school. Here I should like to pay a tribute to the keenness of the above two gentlemen who tried hard to find the desired accommodation, and finally the difficulty was solved by the late Dewan Bahadur Ramaswami Nayudu himself offering me his own new house which was just nearing completion in the Big Street, Triplicane, and it was here that the new Secondary and Training School was opened on 5th March, 1913.

While all these negotiations were going on, R. S. Subbalakshimi Ammal, the destined Superintendent of the new hostel, called to see me in July 1911, when I solemnly discussed the scheme in all its bearings with the youthful widow graduate who, in appearance, seemed to carry on her shoulders the weight of years of innate wisdom, for her conversation clearly revealed a very close acquaintance with all the difficulties of the child-widow problem. She had recently got her B.A. Degree of the Madras University, and she was now eager to begin the work to which she had dedicated her life and for which she ardently wished to gain some experience as a teacher. Rather than wait for a well-paid post, R. S. Subbalakshimi Ammal unselfishly accepted on the 1st August, 1911, the first vacancy to hand, viz., that of Assistant in the Presidency Training School, Egmore, on Rs. 50 per mensem, as this was the school where she had been educated and it was also quite close to her parents' house. She studied for her L.T. Degree the same year and passed the examination successfully in April 1912. After the vacation of that year, we decided that the moment had come for beginning the new work by first financing it from public subscriptions until such time as Government sanction could be obtained for the entire scheme. Sister Subbalakshimi, as we then called her, and as she has been known ever since, opened the new Home in Egmore itself with four widow pupils who were well known to her family. On the 8th July, I sent a letter to the Director of Public Instruction definitely asking for Government sanction and informing him at the same time that I had rented a house at Rs. 25 per mensem at Egmore, in anticipation of sanction. Sir Henry Stone, the then Director of Public Instruction, ably supported the scheme and

Government were accordingly addressed. My boldness in disregarding the recognised procedure by renting a house in anticipation of sanction was officially noticed, but luckily the amount received from public subscriptions sufficed for defraying all expenses until the long awaited sanction came on the 26th August, 1912. At last the scheme of 1907 was launched with an official blessing on the 1st September, 1912, when seven more pupils, making eleven in all, joined the Home.

Sister Subbalakshimi, by her noble appeal to public charity, actually succeeded in raising Rs. 1,938-14-1, of which Rs. 343-6-8 was spent for the months of July and August, and the balance of Rs. 1,500 in round figures was duly deposited in the Bank and the interest of this money has since that time been utilised for the extra Sanskrit tuition given to the widows in the Home and School.

Life and Work in the New Home.

CHAPTER II.

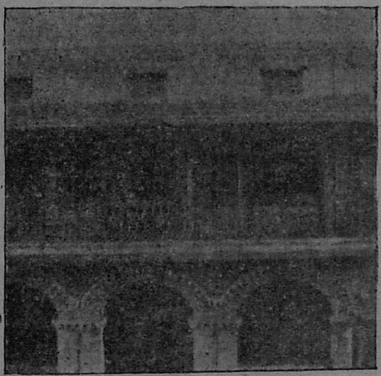
THE first bungalow which was rented at Egmore for the new hostel was soon found to be much too small and I accordingly made an official application for permission to rent a more commodious one. Meanwhile, however, it became more and more apparent that Egmore, which is far remote from the orthodox Hindu centres, was quite the wrong place for carrying out such a 'Novel Experiment' as the development of a Brahman Widows' Home.

The education and atmosphere of the Presidency Training School were equally unsuitable owing to the fact that the training of Anglo-Indian teachers necessitated special emphasis on the teaching of English in the Model School, so that adequate facilities may be afforded in the practice of teaching to the group of European and Anglo-Indian students who are trained in this school. The attendance, too, of so many Anglo-Indian students necessarily creates a more anglicised atmosphere which, to some extent influences the Hindu girls to copy English dress and manners. Such an exotic atmosphere was clearly unsuitable for the fostering of Hindu character based on accepted customs; a more orthodox environment was therefore required to encourage the young Brahman widows to take a pride in their own beautiful Hindu setting, and especially for training them to disseminate education among those Hindu women who would otherwise be unwilling to accept it at the hands of those who differ radically from them not only in religious beliefs but also even in those matters which vitally affect everyday life and social intercourse amongst all orthodox Hindus.

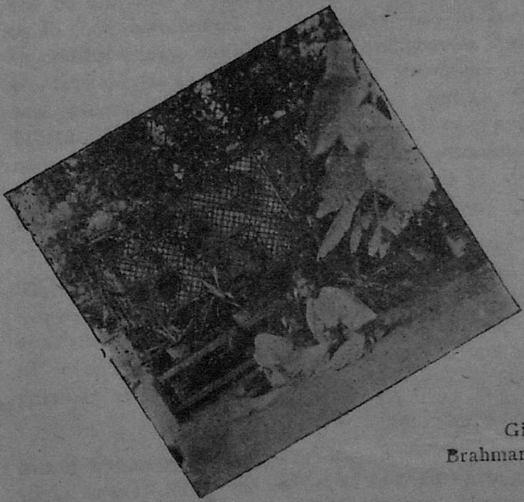
The correspondence regarding the removal of the school to the more orthodox region of Triplicane still went on until we definitely closed with the offer of the late Dewan Bahadur Ramaswami Nayudu's house, and thither the school was shifted on 5th March, 1913. Then I waited for a little time longer to see how it would work, and by October, 1913, a house was rented for Rs. 60 per mensem in Tholasingaperumal Coil Street for the location of the hostel which was also slowly but surely growing in strength.

The development of the new Secondary School became so rapid, however, that the rented house in Big Street was soon too small to accommodate its growing strength, and in November, 1913, it was again removed to Rama Rau's palatial residence in Tholasingaperumal Coil Street just opposite the Brahman Widows' New Home.

The staffing of the Triplicane School gave me many anxious moments, as it was of vital importance to secure for the head of the school a woman with marked sympathy in the education of Hindu girls, and for this reason Miss Prager, B.A., L.T., one of the Sub-Assistant Inspectresses, was, at my request, transferred as Superintendent to the Triplicane School, for her active sympathy with the education of Hindu women was by this time well-known to the public. A better choice could not have been made, as in a very short time she completely gained the confidence of the orthodox Hindu community of Triplicane. The school, too, became so markedly popular that the numerous applications for admission could only be restricted by raising the fees in the lower classes to prevent overcrowding. Artificial limits, however, cannot always be set to the growing popularity of a school, and with the opening of the IV, V and VI Forms another house had to be rented in the Big Street for the location of Forms I to VI, leaving the Primary and Training Departments in the house at Tholasingaperumal Coil Street where they are to this day.



Brahmana Widows' Hostel,
Triplicane—1913-1914



Girls of the
Brahmana Widows' Hostel

The first batch of girls to leave the Hostel—1917

The education imparted to the young widows in the Triplicane School is, I think, second to none in the Madras Presidency, and in this congenial atmosphere the ambition of the Brahman child-widows is fostered in a wholesome way and by the very careful teaching of English in the early stages all those possessing the requisite ability can reach the VI Form in about six years, even though they do not know a word of English when first admitted.

Growth and Development.

Starting orginally with four widows in Egmore, the numbers slowly grew at first, for the community jealously watched the working of the new Home until they felt assured that it was carried on in accordance with their own orthodox ideas by respecting those deep-rooted customs which have now come to be vested, as it were, with grave religious significance. It was not then until they were absolutely certain that the life led by the widows in the Home was entirely in accordance with such customs that the Brahman parents freely decided to send their widowed daughters for education to the newly established Widows' Home.

The years 1912—1916 were a time of stress and hard and anxious work in striving to obtain widows for the Home and also in endeavouring to establish its reputation in such a way that even the most conservative would fail to find any radical flaws either in the conduct of the Home itself or in the education imparted to the widows in the Secondary School which was specially established for them. I gave up a good deal of my own leisure while in camp to the work of recruiting suitable widows for the Home, and the numerous interviews I had with Brahman public officials would form a very interesting chapter if time allowed a detailed recital of them. The name of one keen sympathiser, the Honourable Mr. R. Ramachandra Rao, who was then Collector of Nellore, deserves, however, special honourable mention, as he spared neither time nor money in helping to persuade conservative parents to allow their young widow daughters to come to Madras and join the new Home which was especially established for them. The prejudices of one parent were quickly overcome, when Mr. Ramachandra Rao promised to pay him a monthly dole of Rs. 5 if he allowed his young widowed daughter of twelve years of age to join the Home and this money was readily paid for two whole years until Mr. R. Ramachandra Rao was transferred from Nellore to Madras on promotion. By this time happily the parents were sufficiently convinced that it was in their daughter's own interests to allow her to continue her education as a boarder in the Home. I may also mention that my own attempts to obtain this widow resulted in the use of very strong language and definite refusal to comply with my request.

My endeavours to induce parents to send their widowed daughters to the Home were rather unsuccessful at first, until I hit on the plan of inviting them to send their orthodox ladies to Madras to spend a day or two in the Home itself and study its life and working. In this way I succeeded in getting three young widows from the orthodox Zemindari of Punganur for the parents who hearkened not to my words or those of the Brahman teachers of the Punganur High School, waived all objections the moment a favourable report was received from the trusty messenger who was deputed to go to Madras to examine the cooking and other domestic arrangements of the Widows' Home.

While visiting Kumbakonam in 1913, I summoned Sister Subbalakshimi to join me, and we both addressed a meeting in the Theosophical Lodge, which was presided over by the Honourable Mr. V. K. Ramanuja Chariar. Here we did our best to explain the objects of the new Home, but the outcome of this meeting was not so much an accession to its strength as in obtaining a generous subscription from the Chairman who thus evinced his interest in the infant movement. The young widows who returned to their parents' houses during the long school vacation every year became in their turn the best recruiting agents, as even the most deep-rooted prejudice was dispelled when their neighbours saw that their education and training in Madras had made of them, if possible, even better Hindus than they could ever have become in the very restricted atmosphere to which widows are so rigidly confined at home.

The devotion and self-sacrifice, too, of the Superintendent, Sister R. S. Subbalakshimi and her widowed aunt, V. S. Valambal Ammal, also proved to be a most potent means of attracting new pupils, as by their excellent management, their firm yet kind discipline, their practical religious training which is of such vital importance in the life of the Hindu widows, as well as by their own constant personal example, they obtained more fruitful results than could ever have been achieved by mere preaching, which of itself is so often barren of permanent good. To those two devoted ladies, then, the continued success of the Home is largely due, and I only hope that before they relinquish the reins of office the work will have been laid on such a permanent foundation that neither political bias nor modern indifference can in any way minimise the further development of this pioneer movement, which was established with such difficulty and even in spite of the opposition offered to it by the Brahman community itself in the early stages.

At a garden party given in December 1917, by His Excellency the Governor of Madras, Lord Pentland, in honour of his distinguished guests, His Excellency Lord Chelmsford and the Honourable Mr. Montagu, I had the honour of being specially summoned before the Viceroy to explain why this hostel was exclusively reserved for Brahmans. The answer was brief, viz., that child-widows, young enough to benefit by secondary education, existed only amongst the Brahman community, as the age of marriage amongst the numerous non-Brahman castes was usually seventeen or eighteen so that it is rare, indeed, to find any child-widows in castes other than the Brahmans. At the same time I may be allowed to state here that my sympathy with the education of the girls of the non-Brahman caste is just as keen, as may be judged from the fact that Government sanction was also obtained for the establishment of a hostel for non-Brahmans in connection with the Government Secondary and Training School, Triplicane. The strength of this hostel is now twenty-five including three widows, fourteen pupils and eight students under training, and all are educated in the Triplicane Secondary and Training School.

I now come to the last stage of this brief history in which the aims of the hostel and the portion of the work actually accomplished will have to be briefly described. Starting with four widows the number in the hostel by the end of 1912-1913 reached thirteen, which necessitated the sanction of ten additional scholarships, and when the number reached twenty, again ten more scholarships were sanctioned and then four were transferred from another circle. With the advance to forty-five sanction was obtained for the requisite number of fifteen additional scholarships, until finally the last six scholarships were sanctioned in September, 1919, so that the number of widow scholars in the Home now stands at sixty-two, while there are seventeen paying pupils, six paying widows and eight stipendiary widow students undergoing training, or ninety-three in all.

With the growth of the hostel the young widows appreciated so much the education they were receiving that they begged that their younger sisters and cousins should also be admitted as paying pupils. As long as there is room for these paying boarders, a strictly limited number have been and will be admitted from time to time. But now that the total number in the hostel has reached the large number of ninety-three, the time has come, I think, for opening a special establishment for the paying girls so as to secure that individual attention which is so necessary for all the inmates of every boarding establishment.

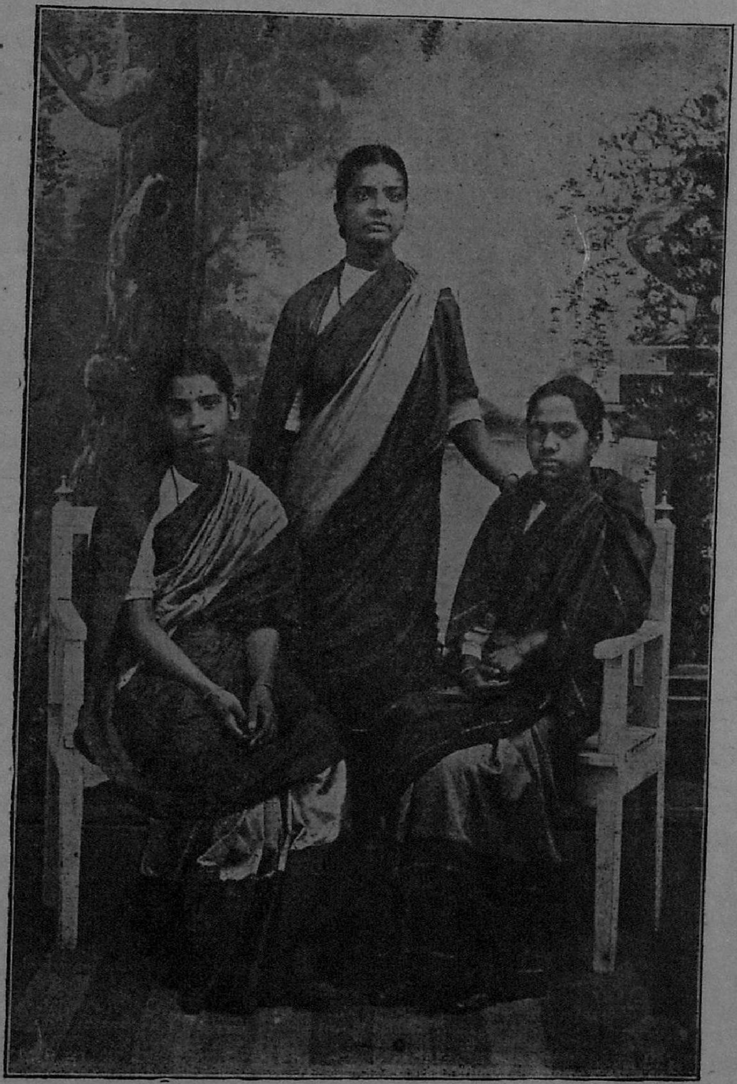
The little Home in Triplicane was finally abandoned in January, 1915, when Government purchased the property known as the Ice House for Rs. 80,000, whither the Brahman Widows' Home was removed, and where it still is. This beautiful mansion by the sea is most suitable for the location of the hostel, and all those who are interested in the work may, with permission, visit the Home any Sunday, when they will probably be agreeably surprised at seeing the young Brahman widows playing such vigorous games as Tennis and Badminton, and on further inquiry they will also learn that the little widows are as happy, healthy and as busily occupied as their most devoted well-wishers would like them to be.

In June, 1917, the first batch of three widows completed the Secondary School-leaving Certificate course, and their names appeared in the eligible list for admission to College. They were duly admitted to Queen Mary's College in July of the same year, and of these, one is now studying in the Junior B.A. Class; one was obliged to leave College and take up the teaching profession so as to give help and support to her young widowed sister and family of three children who were practically left helpless, while the third, who has a strong bent for Mathematics, will appear this year for the Intermediate. Of the second batch of four students three joined the Lady Hardinge Medical College, Delhi, in September, 1918, and I received most satisfactory accounts of their progress last year, so that I now hope they will be able to appear for the Intermediate Science Examination next March—preparatory to entering on regular medical studies the following September. The fourth widow unfortunately had too weak a constitution to continue her College studies, yet, I still have hopes that she will be able to take up teaching in a Telugu school next year. Of the third batch of three, two widows entered Queen Mary's College in July, 1919, while the third joined the Lady Hardinge Medical College, Delhi, to be trained as a nurse. The widows who are too old on admission to benefit by a secondary education have been trained as Elementary teachers, and about twelve of them are now working in various schools throughout the Presidency. This list of successes, I think, proves clearly the utility of the movement in helping to provide trained caste women teachers, doctors and nurses for the Madras Presidency, but it is probably only when some widows have actually qualified as doctors and graduated as teachers that the public will fully realise the contribution that the Brahman Widows' Hostel is likely to afford to the moral and social advancement of the conservative caste women of the Hindu community.

When the time comes for leaving India, I shall say good-bye to this part of my work with much regret, and my visits to the Ice House will ever be remembered with sincere pleasure in consideration of the privileged part I was allowed to play in co-operation with Sister R. S. Subbalakshimi in helping to establish the Brahmana Widows' Home, Madras.

C. M. DRYSDALE.

6 A



The second batch of girls to leave the Hostel—1918

Brahmana Widows' Hostel, Madras—1915.

Miss Lynch. Her Excellency Lady Pentland. Sister Subbalakshimi.

6B

The Ice House

I lie on my mat in the Round Room
  In the heat of the afternoon ;
I'm lulled by the briny breezes
  That are soughing their drowsy tune.

I think of the days when the Ice House
  Was as cold as Himalayan snow
With American ice in her turrets,
  In her chambers and cellars below.

I picture the bleakness and darkness
  With that crystalline coldness filled
And the vision of gloom and of darkness
  Like a ghostly breath leaves me chilled.

I rise and I peep from the window
  At the dear cheery hostel grounds.
The garden, all flickered with sarees
  And a live with its girlish sounds.

There's a chant of some Sanskrit slokas
  There's a gay ringing laugh on the stair
There are pattering feet in the passage,
  And the music floats up on the air.

Dispelled is my melancholy vision
  With the coldness of death it was a rife
For now with its youth and their laughter
  The Ice House is warm with life.

POPSY-THE-HERMIT.

METHODIST PUBLISHING HOUSE, MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS—1919.

Brahmana Widows' Hostel, Madras—1919.

Sister Subbalakshimi Mrs. Drysdale

7A

12975

EGMORE, MADRAS